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Selected Speeches and News Releases

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USDA PROTECTS 24 NEW PLANT VARIETIES

WASHINGTON, Aug. 26—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued certificates of protection to developers of 24 new varieties of seed-reproduced plants, including alfalfa, garden bean, corn, cotton, red fescue, tall fescue, lettuce, rape, perennial ryegrass, soybean, and wheat.

Kenneth H. Evans, of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said developers of the new varieties will have the exclusive right to reproduce, sell, import, and export their products in the United States for 18 years. Certificates of protection are granted after a review of the breeders' records and claims that each new variety is novel, uniform, and stable.

The following varieties have been issued certificates of protection:

- the Sutter and Arroyo varieties of alfalfa, developed by Plant Genetics Inc., Davis, Calif.;
- the Slenderwax variety of garden bean, developed by the Musser Seed Co., Twin Falls, Idaho;
- the 78371A, FBHJ, and PB80 varieties of corn, developed by DeKalb-Pfizer Genetics, DeKalb, Ill.;
- the PHK42, PHK76, PHN11, PHT77, and PHV63 varieties of corn, developed by Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc., Johnston, Iowa;
- the GSC 30 variety of cotton, developed by the Agrigenetics Corp. doing business as GroAgri Seed Co., Lubbock, Texas;
- the Vista variety of red fescue, developed by Pure-Seed Testing Inc., Hubbard, Ore.;
- the Mesa variety of tall fescue, developed by the Jacklin Seed Co., Post Falls, Idaho;
- the Royal Red variety of lettuce, developed by Royal Sluis Inc., Salinas, Calif.;
- the Legend variety of rape, developed by Svalof AB, Sweden;
- the Competitor variety of perennial ryegrass, developed by Pure-Seed Testing Inc., Hubbard, Ore.;
- the Hartz 5164 and Hartz 6385 varieties of soybean, developed by the Jacob Hartz Seed Co. Inc., Stuttgart, Ark.;
- the Geneva variety of wheat, developed by the Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, N.Y.;

—the 775 variety of wheat, developed by the Northrup King Co., Minneapolis, Minn.;

—the 2154, 2555, and 2385 varieties of wheat, developed by Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc., Windfall, Ind.;

Certificates of protection for the Legend rape and the Geneva wheat varieties are being issued to be sold by variety name only as a class of certified seed, and to conform to the number of generations specified by the owner.

The plant variety protection program is administered by AMS and provides marketing protection to developers of new and distinctive seedreproduced plants ranging from farm crops to flowers.

Carolyn Coutts (202) 447-8998

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USDA ANNOUNCES PROVISIONS FOR EXPANDED LIVESTOCK FEED ASSISTANCE

WASHINGTON, Aug. 26—Acting Secretary of Agriculture Roland R. Vautour announced several new emergency livestock feed assistance provisions effective today.

Vautour said if a producer suffers a crop loss which would allow benefits under both the emergency livestock feed assistance provisions and the 1988 disaster payment program, the producer may not receive benefits for the same loss from both programs.

“However, a livestock producer who has a loss of 1988 crop corn production could receive emergency livestock feed assistance based on part of his loss and disaster payments based on the remainder.”

Vautour said producers should be aware of certain restrictions that are applicable to the emergency livestock feed assistance provisions.

“A producer must be actively engaged in farming and receive a substantial amount of total income from the production of grain or livestock to be eligible,” he said. “In addition, producers with qualifying gross revenues exceeding \$2,500,000 are ineligible to receive any emergency livestock feed benefits.”

“Qualifying gross revenue” means that if a majority of the person’s annual income is received from farming and ranching operations, the gross revenue is that derived from that person’s farming and ranching operations. If less than the majority of the person’s annual income is

received from farming and ranching operations, the person's gross revenue is that revenue derived from all sources.

Vautour said that while statutory provisions of the Disaster Assistance Act of 1988 are effective today, the regulations and operating procedures which will implement these provisions have not yet been completed. Vautour also said, "Producers should start assembling their sales receipts and other data to substantiate their actual production information."

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-6787

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USDA EXTENDS EMERGENCY HAYING PROVISIONS FOR DROUGHT AREAS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 26—Milton Hertz, executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation, today extended the period for emergency haying of acreage enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) through Sept. 30.

The CRP acreage must be in counties approved for emergency haying and grazing of acreage designated as Acreage Conservation Reserve and Conservation Use Acreage.

Hertz said the action was taken because of the continuing severity of the drought.

Producers in counties designated as eligible for this special program can get further details from their county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service office.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-6787

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USDA SEEKS COMMENT ON AMENDMENT TO BEEF INSTITUTIONAL PURCHASE SPECIFICATIONS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 29—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is seeking comment on a proposal to amend the Institutional Meat Purchase Specifications (IMPS) by listing new items and modifying descriptions of existing ones to make them more precise.

Several new cuts are now practical for the large, institutional buyers of fresh beef, such as schools, hospitals, and the Department of Defense,

and may merit inclusion in IMPS, according to Paul M. Fuller of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.

Two of the new items proposed are "rib, regular" (the beef loin minus its "short plate") and "beef trimmings, trimmed" (virtually fat-free). Institutions are increasingly interested in the lean trimmings for menu items such as pepper steak and steak sandwiches, Fuller said.

IMPS include three sets of specifications. One, "General Requirements," provides guidelines for refrigeration and packaging. A second set is descriptions of fresh beef, lamb, veal and calf, pork, cooked and cured beef, cured pork, variety meats, and sausage products. A series number titles each of the eight descriptions. Series 100 covers fresh beef. The third IMPS set, "Quality Assurance Provisions," is a guide for using samples to determine a product's acceptability.

The proposed amendment results from issues raised by the industry after IMPS Series 100 was revised last January, Fuller said.

All those of record involved in supplying institutions and purchasing for them have been sent copies of the proposals, titled "Proposed Amendment No. 1 to Institutional Meat Purchase Specifications for Fresh Beef, Series 100." Copies also are available from Michael L. May, Chief, Standardization Branch, Livestock and Seed Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2649-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456.

Comments may be sent to Michael L. May by Sept. 23, 1988.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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USDA EXTENDS COMMENT PERIOD FOR PROPOSED POULTRY AMENDMENTS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 29—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced a 60-day comment period extension on a proposal to amend existing poultry regulations, which was published in the July 11 Federal Register.

The comment period, which was to expire Sept. 8, has been extended to Nov. 8 because of industry requests.

The proposed amendments are designed to bring regulations into conformance with the Poultry Producers Financial Protection Act of 1987 (P.L. 100-173).

Mail written comments to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Packers and Stockyards Administration, Room 3039, South Building, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Frances Frieder (202) 382-9528.

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USDA SETS PUBLIC MEETING ON QUALITY OF EXPORTED GRAIN IN TRANSIT

WASHINGTON, Aug. 30—A special subcommittee of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service Advisory Committee will hold a public meeting Saturday, Sept. 27, at 10 a.m. in the American Farm Bureau Federation Board Room, 225 Toughy Ave., Park Ridge, Ill., to discuss issues concerning the quality of U.S. grain in shipment to foreign destinations.

The subcommittee will consider whether it is possible to determine if exported grain is likely to deteriorate in condition while in transit, and whether additional federal regulatory action is warranted to provide accurate grading of such grain.

Public participation will be limited to written statements unless otherwise authorized by the subcommittee chairman. Those who wish to address the subcommittee at the meeting or to submit written statements should contact Subcommittee Chairman John White Jr., 1701 Towanda Ave., Bloomington, Ill. 61701; telephone (309) 557-3211.

Official notification of this meeting will be published Aug. 30 in the Federal Register.

Allen A. Atwood, (202) 475-3367.

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FGIS ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE TO CONSIDER NEW AGENCY MISSION STATEMENT

WASHINGTON, Aug. 30—A special subcommittee of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service Advisory Committee will hold a public meeting Monday, Sept. 26, at 10 a.m. at the FGIS Technical Center, 10383 North Executive Hills Blvd., Kansas

City, Mo., to prepare recommendations on rewriting the statement of FGIS' mission.

The agenda includes a review of past mission statements, a declaration of policy as stated by the U.S. Grain Standards Act and as modified by the Grain Quality Improvement Act of 1986, and proposed new mission statements.

Public participation will be limited to written statements unless otherwise authorized by the subcommittee chairman. Those who wish to address the subcommittee at the meeting or to submit written statements should contact FGIS Subcommittee Chairman Fred Midcap, 5143 Road 3, Wiggins, Colo. 80654; telephone (303) 432-5528.

Official notification of this meeting will be published Aug. 30 in the Federal Register.

Allen A. Atwood, (202) 475-3367.

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USDA REOPENS COMMENT PERIOD ON INSPECTION PROPOSAL

WASHINGTON, Aug. 30—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is reopening the public comment period on its proposal to require that imported meat and poultry be inspected only at the port of first arrival. In response to requests made during the initial two-month comment period, the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service will accept additional comments through Sept. 22.

A copy of the proposal, Prohibition on Movement of Product Prior to Reinspection, Docket No. 86-031P, appeared in the Aug. 23 Federal Register. Comments should be sent to: Policy Office, Attn.: Linda Carey, FSIS Hearing Clerk, Room 3171-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

FSIS inspects imported and domestic meat and poultry products sold in interstate commerce to ensure that they are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled.

Linda Russell (202) 447-9113

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SCIENTISTS READY FOR POSSIBLE U.S. INVASION OF AFRICANIZED BEES

WASHINGTON—If Africanized honey bees continue their northward migration, U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists will detect them through baited traps strung across 345 miles of north Mexico and the Rio Grande Valley.

“Data from the traps will guide efforts to limit the spread of Africanized bees and control their effects on the public and the farm sector,” said William Rubink, an entomologist with USDA’s Agricultural Research Service.

The bait in the traps is a synthetic version of a chemical, called a pheromone, that scout bees release to attract a swarm to a new nesting site.

Checked every two weeks, the traps so far have captured only European honey bees, said Rubink, of the agency’s Honey Bee Research Laboratory in Weslaco, Texas. These are the common bees of commerce on which U.S. and Mexican farmers and beekeepers rely for pollinating crops and making honey.

In cooperation with the Mexican Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, Rubink and colleagues at Weslaco have placed about 550 baited traps along three lines crossing the “corridor of travel” the bees would likely follow northwards.

About 250 miles south of the agency’s Mexico trap line, Rubink added, a bee regulated zone designed to genetically modify Africanized bees is being set up by USDA and Mexico.

“Officials hope this particular zone will genetically reduce the bees’ aggressiveness or at least slow them down considerably and hold down the numbers that will continue northwards,” he said. “But if any get to north Mexico and Texas, our bait traps will give us an early warning of exactly when they arrive and in what numbers.”

The zone, established by USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the Mexican Agriculture Ministry, is located about 400 miles south of the border. It is divided into two operational areas, one in the state of Veracruz on the Gulf Coast and one in the state of Oaxaca on the Pacific side.

In these areas, U.S. and Mexican bee experts are destroying hives of Africanized bees. A swarm recently spotted near the city of Veracruz was trapped and destroyed, Rubink said.

Bee experts in the zone also are using a variety of methods to “Europeanize” Africanized bees—that is, to dilute undesirable genetic traits such as extreme defensiveness. For example, Rubink said, the numbers of European honey bees in the zone are being increased so they will mate with Africanized queens that escape direct capture.

North of the zone, he said, ARS traps have been set at about 95 stations in Mexico and 39 in Texas. The Texas stations follow a 100-mile stretch of the Rio Grande River from Brownsville northwest to Rio Grande City.

In the Mexican state of Tamaulipas, traps follow a 120-mile line from the coasta town of La Pesca to Ciudad Victoria, about 150 miles south of Brownsville. The third USDA trap line runs 125 miles from Tampico to Ocampo, about 250 miles north of the city of Veracruz, he said. South of that location, the University of Georgia also has placed a trap line, about 20 miles north of the city of Veracruz.

After five months, more than 200 swarms of European honey bees have been captured in the baited traps, five times the numbers anticipated, according to entomologist William Wilson, research leader of the project.

“It’s been just a tremendous response, much more than we’d expected,” he said. “The buildup of swarms may be a natural local spring occurrence or may indicate bees are traveling great distances in search of nesting sites. Whatever the reason, more swarms means better baseline data to work with.”

The number of bees in a swarm vary, Wilson said, “but there are approximately 3,500 worker bees per pound, and large swarms weigh in at about two to three pounds each.”

Matt Bosisio (301) 685-4011

Issued: August 30, 1988

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, Aug. 30—Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard W. Goldberg today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

- long grain whole kernels, 10.68 cents per pound;
- medium grain whole kernels, 9.82 cents per pound;
- short grain whole kernels, 9.74 cents per pound;
- broken kernels, 5.34 cents per pound.

Minimum loan repayment rates for 1987-crop loans are the higher of the world price or 50 percent of the loan rate. For 1988-crop rice, the minimum repayment rates are the higher of the world price or 60 percent of the loan rate.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, rough rice world prices are estimated to be:

- long grain, \$6.42 per hundredweight;
- medium grain, \$6.11 per hundredweight;
- short grain, \$5.93 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3:00 P.M. EDT. The next scheduled price announcement will be made Sept. 6, 1988 at 3:00 P.M. EDT, although prices may be announced sooner if warranted.

Gene Rosera (202) 447-5954

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USDA ANNOUNCES CERTAIN CCC LOANS WILL NOT BE EXTENDED ON AUG. 31

WASHINGTON, Aug. 30—Milton Hertz, executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation, announced today that certain CCC price support loans which mature starting Aug. 31 will not be extended.

A final rule has been filed with the Federal Register stating which loans will be extended and which will not. Hertz said this action is consistent with loan extension decisions USDA announced in January and March.

The following loans will not be extended:

—1987 and subsequent crop price support regular loans for feed grains, rice, soybeans and wheat;

—1985- and 1986-crop extended loans of wheat, barley, oats and soybeans;

—1983 and prior crop year Farmer Owned Reserve (FOR) loans;

—Special Producer Storage loans.

The following loans can be extended at the producer's option for one year:

—1985- and 1986-crop corn and sorghum extended loans which mature on March 31, 1988 through and including Dec. 31, 1988;

—1984-crop FOR loans which mature on March 31, 1988 through and including Dec. 31, 1988;

In addition, 1987 crops of wheat and feed grains will not be permitted to enter the FOR.

Producers with outstanding loans which mature starting Aug. 31, including those loans which would have otherwise matured on July 31, have the option of redeeming the commodity pledged as collateral for the price support loan by repaying the principal, interest and other applicable charges or forfeiting the collateral to CCC in full satisfaction of their loan obligation, Hertz said.

Bob Feist (202) 447-6789

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USDA ISSUES MODEL PLAN TO DETECT SALMONELLA ENTERITIDIS IN EGG LAYING FLOCKS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 31—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today sent to state agriculture and animal health officials and the poultry industry a voluntary model plan for testing poultry flocks for Salmonella enteritidis, and asked that they implement it to help reduce the presence of the bacteria in table eggs.

The Food and Drug Administration will distribute the plan to state public health officials.

Dr. Kenneth A. Gilles, assistant secretary of agriculture for marketing and inspection services, said the Salmonella Enteritidis Model State Quality Assurance Program responds to recent public health concerns about the increasing incidence of salmonellosis in humans due to S. enteritidis food borne illnesses associated with table eggs. He said the

program will help determine the extent of the problem, identify infected flocks, and enable producers to assure egg quality.

Last April, the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, Ga., reported more than 2,000 cases of *S. enteritidis*, in the Northeast from Jan. 1985 to May 1987, which included 11 deaths. CDC said fresh table eggs are usually the source of these infections. On Aug. 19, CDC scientists reported that *S. enteritidis* infections had spread to the East North Central, Mountain and Pacific regions of the country.

Dr. Gilles said the voluntary quality assurance program calls for state agriculture and National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) officials, in cooperation with producers, to test breeder and suspected commercial egg production flocks for *S. enteritidis*. The plan also calls for priority testing of flocks associated with the presence of *S. enteritidis* bacteria in humans and poultry.

NPIP is a voluntary, state-federal-industry program to control certain poultry diseases that are transmitted through hatching eggs and disseminated by hatcheries. The new program is modeled after NPIP, which has all but eliminated *Salmonella pullorum* and fowl typhoid from commercial poultry in the United States, Dr. Gilles said.

The poultry industry, including feed mills and egg processors will be urged to participate in the program by continuing to follow strict biosecurity practices by properly cleaning and disinfecting all trucks, equipment, premises and facilities to prevent the possible transmission of *S. enteritidis*. The program outlines producer options for flocks implicated as sources of eggs infected with *S. enteritidis*.

Dr. Gilles said the program was drafted by the Northeastern Conference on Avian Diseases, an organization of government, university and industry officials. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Agricultural Research Service, and Cooperative State Research Service worked with the FDA and CDC to further develop the program, he said.

"AMS is coordinating USDA efforts and will cooperate with the FDA to assure that eggs from infected flocks, once identified, are directed to processing establishments for pasteurization instead of to fresh egg markets," said Gilles. Pasteurization kills salmonella bacteria.

"APHIS will cooperate with state officials in conducting traceback investigations to identify infected flocks and provide support to approved laboratories.

“ARS is conducting extensive research to discover more information about *S. enteritidis*,” he said. USDA and the poultry industry are also funding research in how the disease is transmitted in laying flocks.

Dr. Gilles said that eggs continue to be an important, wholesome food. He advises consumers, especially high-risk groups, such as the very young, the elderly, pregnant women, and those with weakened immune systems to:

—Cook eggs thoroughly, and avoid raw eggs and products made with raw eggs.

—Keep eggs refrigerated until use.

—Wash hands before handling eggs.

—Use clean eggs with shells that are intact.

Copies of the Salmonella Enteritidis Model State Quality Assurance Program are available from Poultry Division, AMS, Room 3932-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

George Clarke (202) 447-8998

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USDA TERMINATES MIXED POULTRY FEED INITIATIVE UNDER EXPORT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Aug. 31—Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard W. Goldberg today announced that the Commodity Credit Corporation will no longer accept bonus applications for the export of mixed poultry feed under the Export Enhancement Program, effective at 3:01 p.m. on Sept. 1. Goldberg also announced that CCC Bonus Announcement MPF-87-2 would be terminated at the same time.

Only one country, the Yemen Arab Republic, was targeted under the mixed poultry feed initiative, published as EEP Announcement GSM-510. Applications made under Invitation GSM-510-26 and received by 3 p.m. Sept. 1 will be considered, Goldberg said.

For more information on the cancellation of the initiative, call William Hawkins, CCC's Export Credit Division, (202) 382-9240.

Brian Norris, (202) 447-3448.

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CCC LOAN INTEREST RATE FOR SEPTEMBER 8 PERCENT

WASHINGTON, Sept. 1—Commodity loans disbursed in September by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation will carry a 8 percent interest rate, according to Vern Neppl, acting CCC executive vice president.

The new rate, up from August's 7 5/8 percent, reflects the interest rate charged CCC by the U.S. Treasury in September.

Robert Feist (202) 447-6789

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